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SUBJECT: NOVEMBER 2 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: NORTH KOREA, AFRICA
SUMMIT, SUDAN, AVIAN FLU, THAKSIN, WHO, UNSC SEAT, CUBA,
PROTECTING JAPANESE IPR, DALAI LAMA

¶1. Key Points made at the November 2, 2006 Press Briefing were:

-- The resumption of the Six-Party Talks is a positive step towards insuring peace and stability on the North Korean Peninsula. The Talks will resume at the parties' earliest convenience.

-- Six African leaders will make state visits following the China-Africa (FOCAC) Summit.

-- President Hu will meet Sudanese President Bahshir during FOCAC. Resolution of the Darfur issue requires consent of Sudan's government.

-- China did not fail to share samples of an allegedly new strain of avian flu with the WHO.

-- Ex-Thai PM Thaksin's visit to Beijing is a purely private visit.

-- China recommends Margaret Chan as WHO Director-General. It has no comment on Panama's candidacy for the UNSC.

-- China opposes any blockade of Cuba.

-- China stands ready to study a free trade zone with Japan and would protect intellectual property.

North Korea: Six-Party Talks, Border Trade

¶2. MFA Spokesperson Liu Jianchao said the resumption of the Six-Party Talks is a positive step towards insuring peace and stability on the North Korean Peninsula. During the informal three-party talks between the United States, China and North Korea, both the United States and North Korea exerted flexibility and made constructive efforts. The goal of the Six-Party Talks is to implement the Joint Statement agreed upon on September 19, 2005.

¶3. When, where and how the Talks will resume will be up to all six parties to discuss, Liu noted. Despite speculation about whether the Six-Party Talks will resume before or after the APEC meeting in Hanoi, no date has been set for resumption of the Talks. They will resume at the earliest convenience of all parties, the sooner the better, said Liu.

¶4. When asked several times why North Korea changed its position and returned to talks, Liu consistently replied "the United States and DPRK exerted flexibility and constructive efforts for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks" and have come to an understanding to discuss financial issues within

the Six-Party framework. The Spokesman had no comment on reports that the issue of North Koreans counterfeiting U.S. currency had been specifically discussed during the informal three-party talks.

¶5. The Six-Party Talks do not affect the state of sanctions against the DPRK, said the spokesman, and are not an issue to be decided by the Talks. UNSCR 1718 "reflects the consensus of the international community" and each country has a duty to strictly and responsibly implement it. China is no exception, according to Liu. Regarding the possibility that individual nations might impose sanctions, Liu responded that sanctions are not a goal in and of themselves, but one of the means to resolve the Korean Peninsula problem. Noting that Chinese diplomacy does not focus on pressure and sanctions but on negotiations and discussion, Liu said the UNSC Resolution should be strictly abided by, but it is not appropriate to expand its scope.

¶6. Responding to a statement that Chinese border guards confirmed China had cut off oil supplies to North Korea in September, the spokesman said trade between the countries is normal and any specifics should be verified with the relevant authorities.

African Summit

¶7. Noting that 48 African countries have confirmed attendance at the China-Africa Summit (FOCAC), Liu said the exact number of attendees will be announced tomorrow evening. He noted that over 40 African leaders will be in Beijing and that 12 have already arrived. During FOCAC, Beijing will host six state visits by African leaders.

¶8. Chiding reporters for focusing on the five African

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nations that do not have diplomatic relations with China rather than on the over 40 nations that do, Liu said representatives of the other five are welcome in China, but he could not confirm their attendance at the Summit.

¶9. In response to questions criticizing China's no-strings development assistance to African countries with poor human rights records, Liu said China's assistance to Africa is based on equality, transparency and mutual benefit.

¶10. In reply to a question regarding a Human Rights Watch Report criticizing China for not pressuring Somalia and Zimbabwe to improve their human rights records, Liu said China does not consult with such groups in determining foreign policy. China's policies in Africa are for the well-being of both sides. China does not impose its own ideology or values on other nations and trusts them to have the wisdom and the right to decide their own paths of development.

Sudan and Darfur

¶11. Hu Jintao will meet with President Bashir of Sudan in Beijing during the FOCAC, Liu said. Both countries place importance on good bilateral relations and cooperation, and China welcomes Bashir and other Sudanese representatives. FM Li attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony with Bashir to open the Sudanese Embassy in Beijing, the largest African Embassy in China. This indicates the importance China places on the bilateral relationship, Liu said. The UN should and can play a role in addressing the Darfur issue. However, specific UN measures require the consent of the Sudanese government, he said.

Avian Flu

¶12. In response to reports that China had failed to share samples with the WHO of a new strain of bird flu and has not provided samples to the WHO since 2004, Liu initially stated that China and the WHO have good cooperation and communication and efforts continue to control and prevent bird flu. He referred specific questions to the Ministries of Agriculture and Health.

¶13. Later in the briefing, Liu read from a prepared statement, saying that the WHO's allegations are incorrect. The bird flu virus samples from South China are essentially the same as previous samples, said Liu. There is no new strain of avian flu indicated by the samples, he noted.

Thaksin in Beijing

¶14. Ex-Thai Prime Minister Thaksin is in Beijing for a private visit, according to Liu. Thaksin has made no official contact with the Chinese government and the MFA has received no information about his plans as it is a purely private visit, said Liu.

Margaret Chan WHO Candidacy

¶15. China recommends Margaret Chan and strongly supports her candidacy for WHO Director-General, said Liu. Liu would not comment on plans to lobby for Chan with the nine countries participating in FOCAC that have a WHO vote. China is hopeful that she will win despite the competitive race. Whoever wins, China will continue its efforts to develop good relations with the WHO.

UNSC Nonpermanent Member Seat

¶16. Beijing had no comment in response to Panama's bid for the nonpermanent UNSC seat in the wake of the deadlocked voting between Venezuela and Guatemala. China will undertake additional research and discuss the issue with other UN member nations, said Liu.

Cuba Blockade

¶17. In response to a question about the upcoming vote in the UN to recommend an end to the U.S. economic and trade blockade of Cuba, Liu said China is against any blockade of Cuba by any country.

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China-Japan Free Trade Zone

¶18. Responding to a question citing the need for China to protect intellectual property rights if a free trade zone with Japan were to be established, Liu stated that China stands ready to begin a joint study on the proposal for such a free trade zone. Protecting IPR is in the interests of China and more administrative, legal and international cooperation is needed to provide better protection.

Tibet and the Dalai Lama

¶19. The spokesman had no information about contacts between the Tibetan government in exile or representatives of the Dalai Lama and th Chinese government, Liu said in response to a question.
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